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Plavcan et al.

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(54) **CORD CONNECTOR**

USPC 439/296, 449, 460
See application file for complete search history.

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(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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(62) Division of application No. 17/545,095, filed on Dec. 8, 2021, now Pat. No. 11,962,136.

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(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Robinson + Cole LLP

(60) Provisional application No. 63/127,479, filed on Dec. 18, 2020.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

(51) **Int. Cl.**

H02G 3/06	(2006.01)
F16L 5/02	(2006.01)
H01B 7/00	(2006.01)
H01B 17/58	(2006.01)

A cord connector may be used for holding one or more cords. The cord connector includes a first body, a second body, and a bushing. The second body is removably coupled to the first body. The bushing is disposed between the first body and the second body. The bushing includes at least two bushing passages extending from a first end of the bushing toward a second end of the bushing. Each bushing passage is sealed with a membrane. The membrane is disposed within the bushing passage between the first end and the second end. The membrane is configured to be pierced to open the bushing passage.

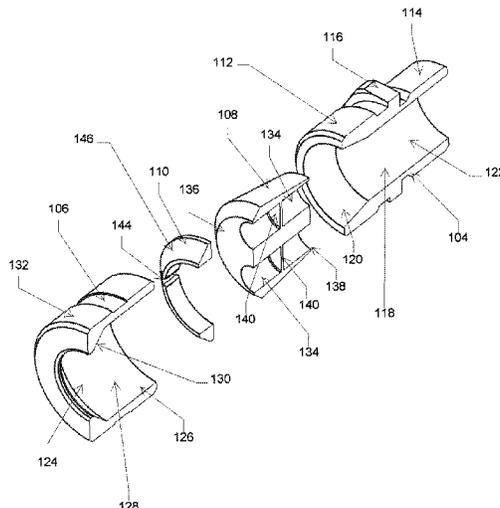
(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **H02G 3/0616** (2013.01); **F16L 5/02** (2013.01); **H01B 7/0045** (2013.01); **H01B 17/583** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC H02G 3/0616; H02G 3/0625; H02G 3/065; H01B 17/583; H01B 17/586; H01B 7/0045; F16L 5/05

20 Claims, 14 Drawing Sheets



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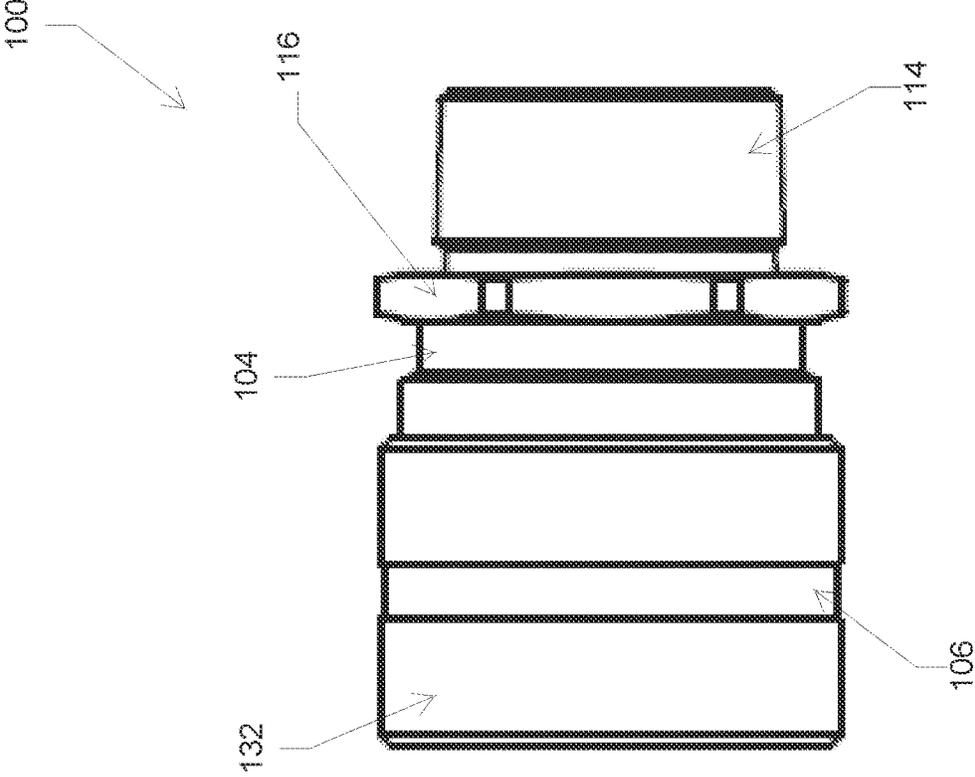


FIG. 1

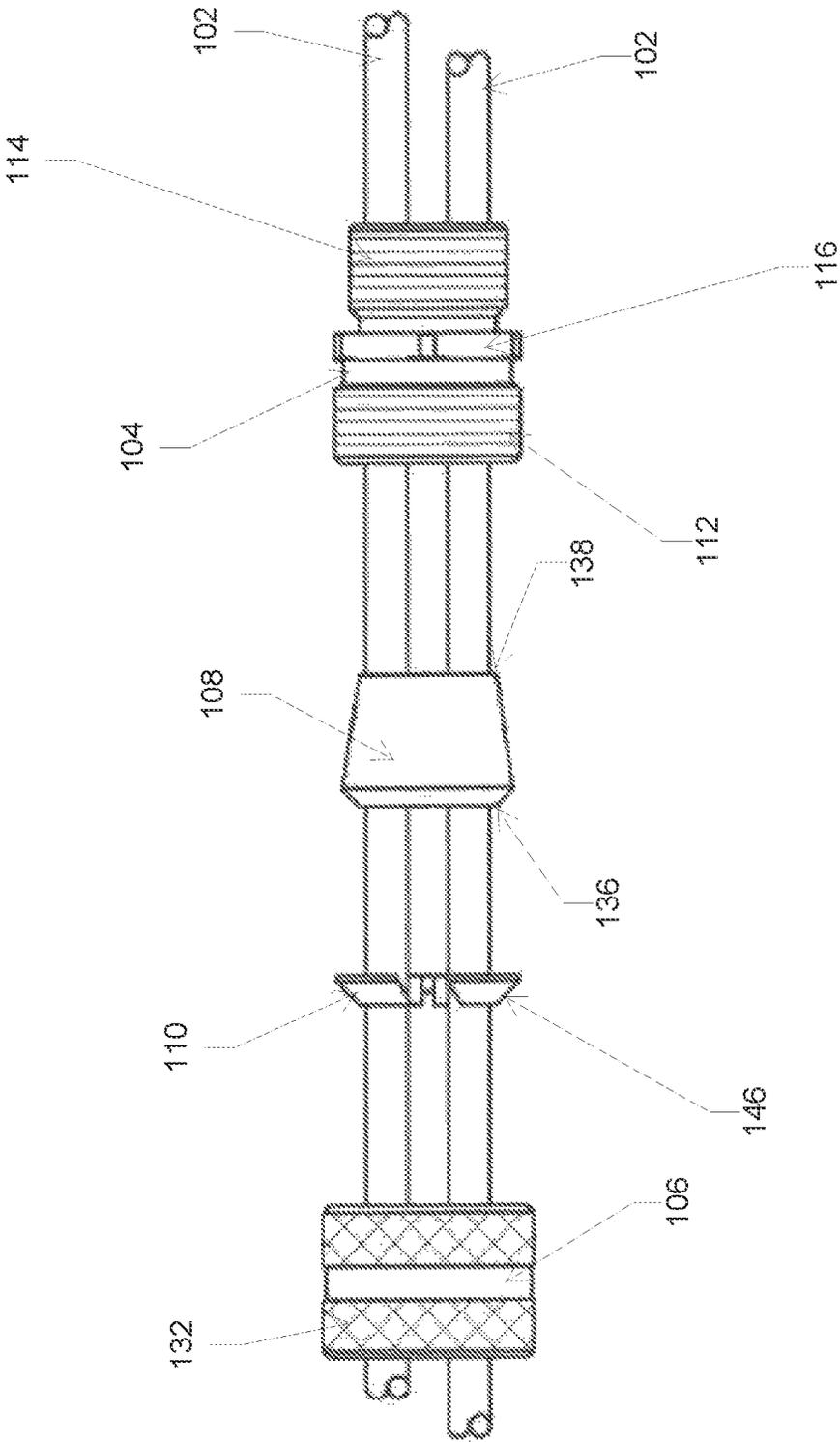


FIG. 2

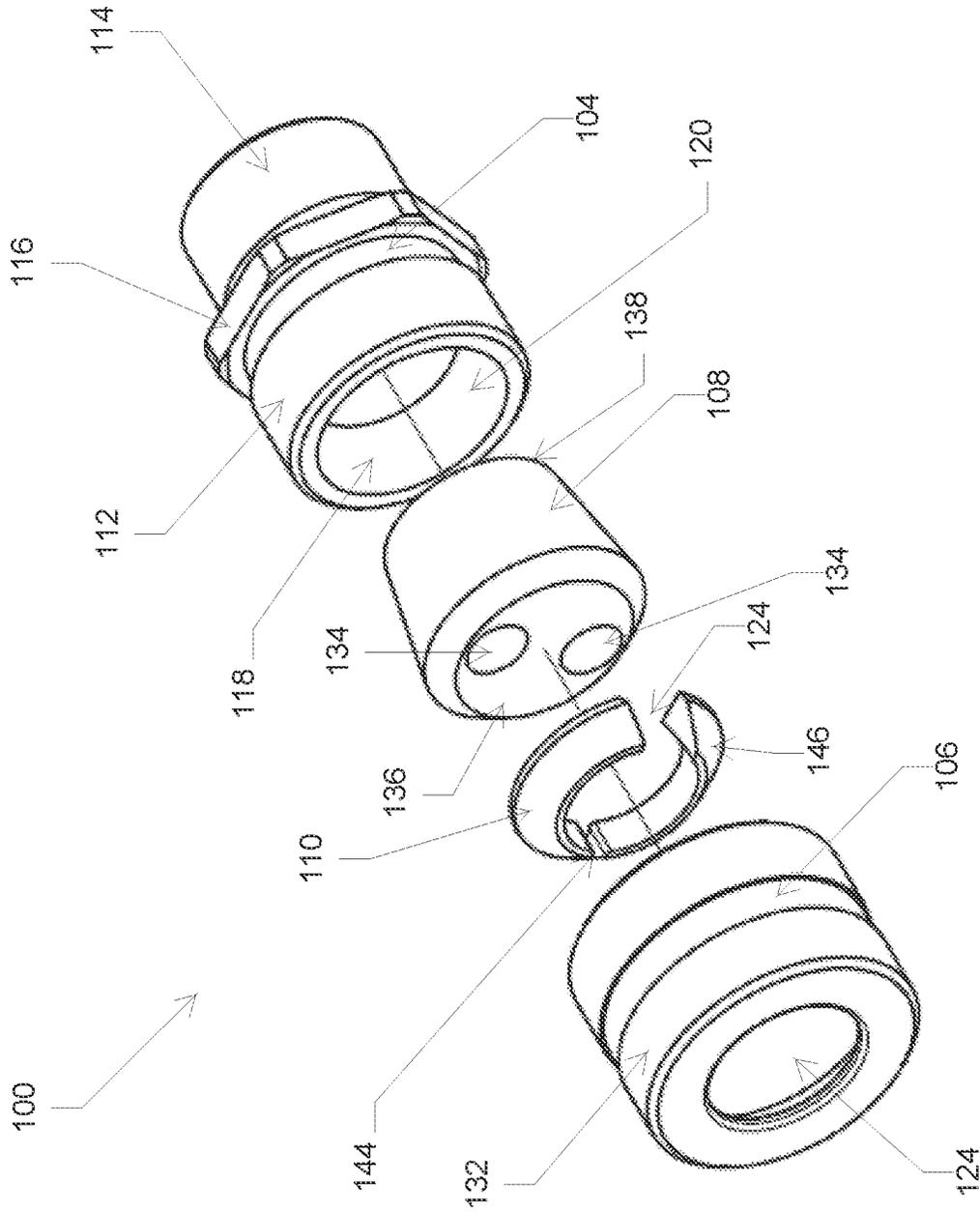


FIG. 3

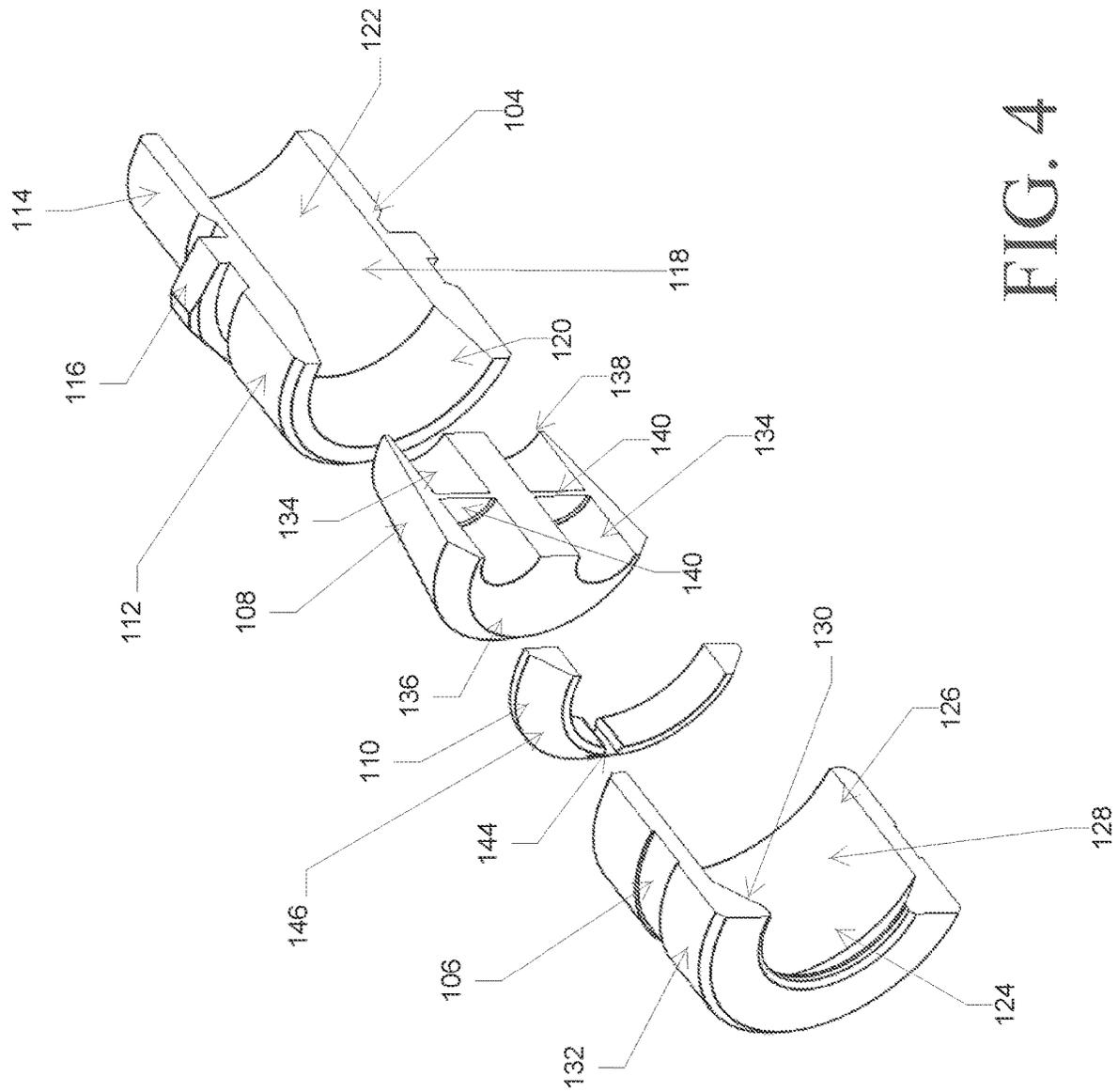


FIG. 4

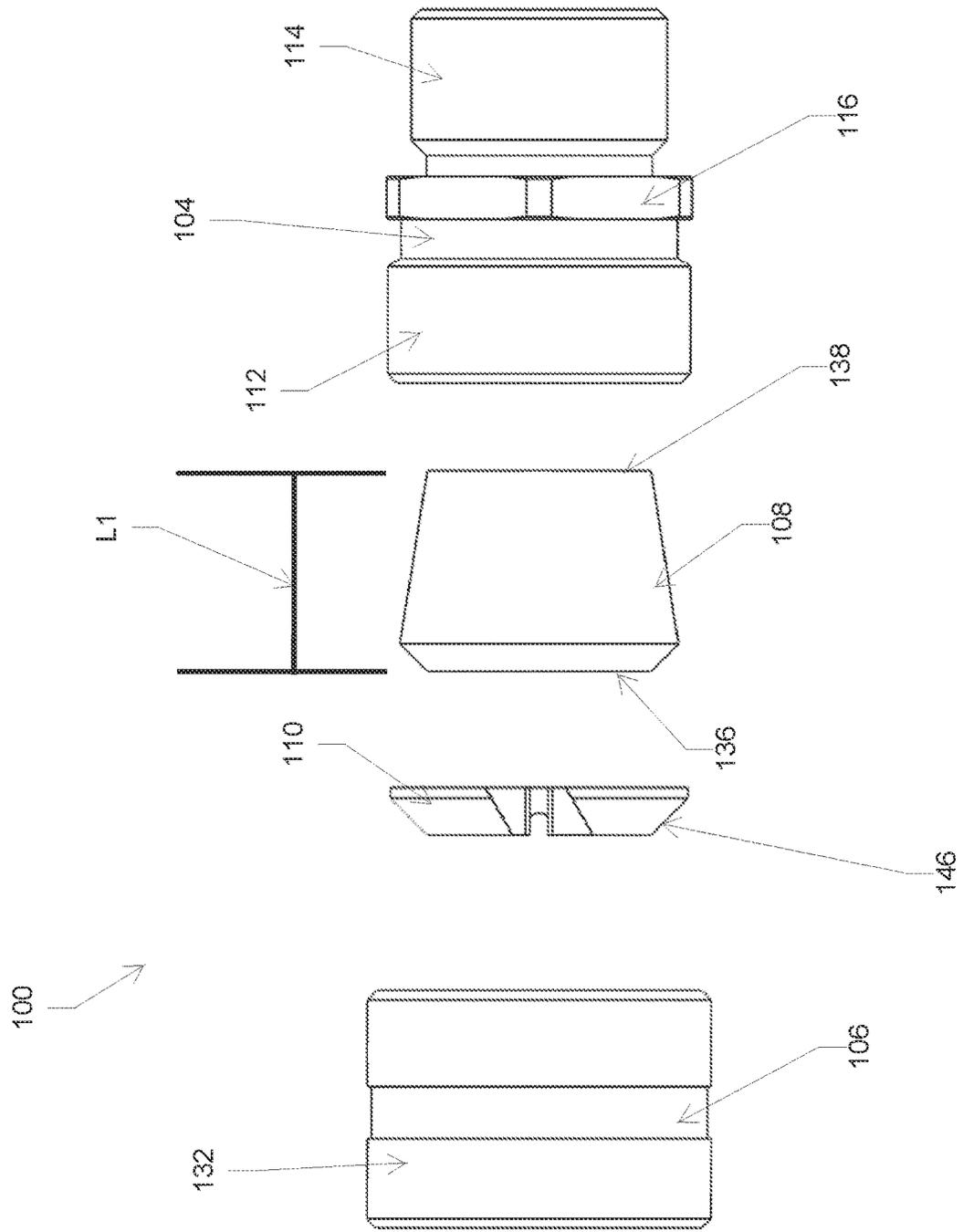


FIG. 5

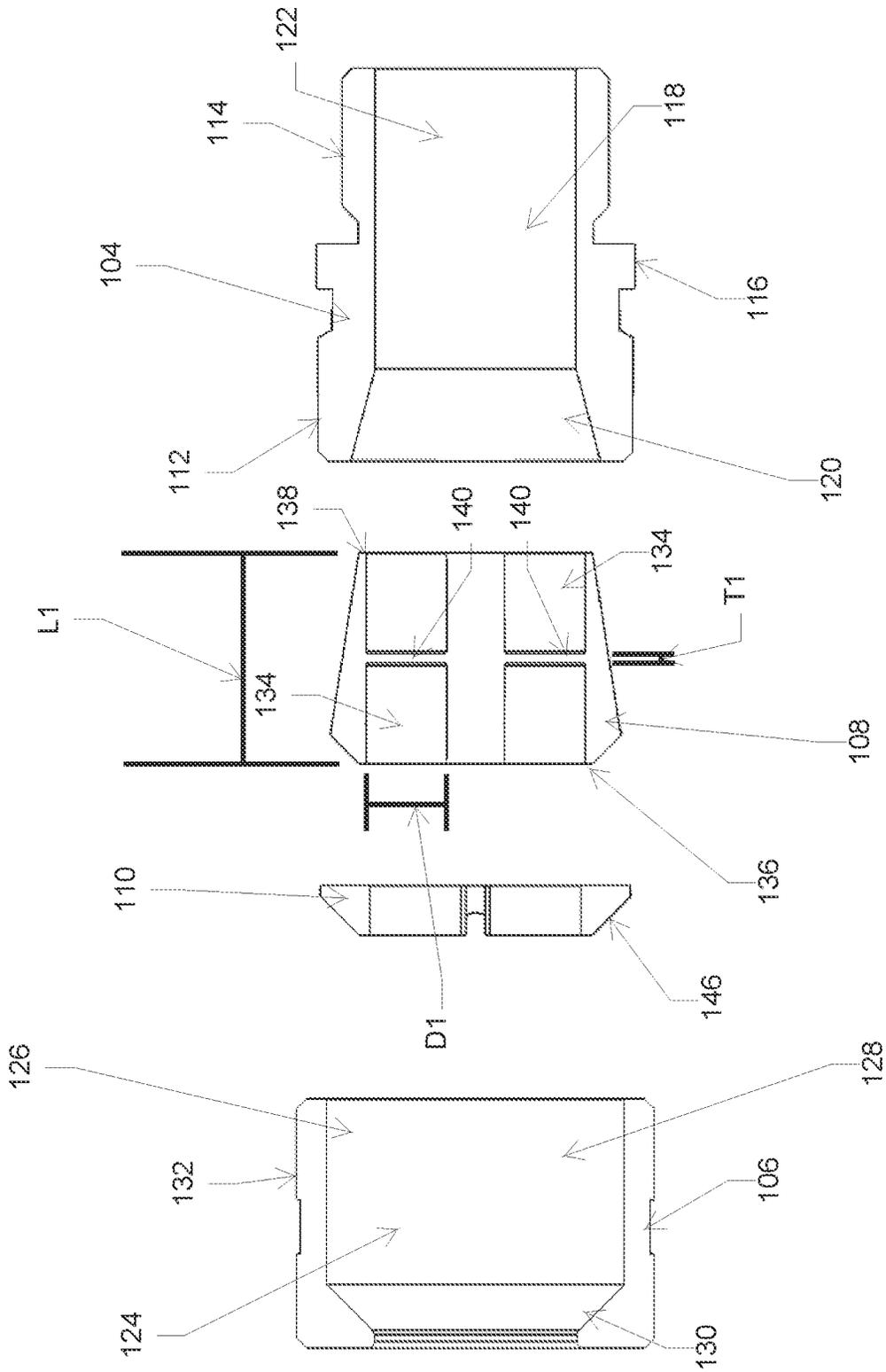


FIG. 6

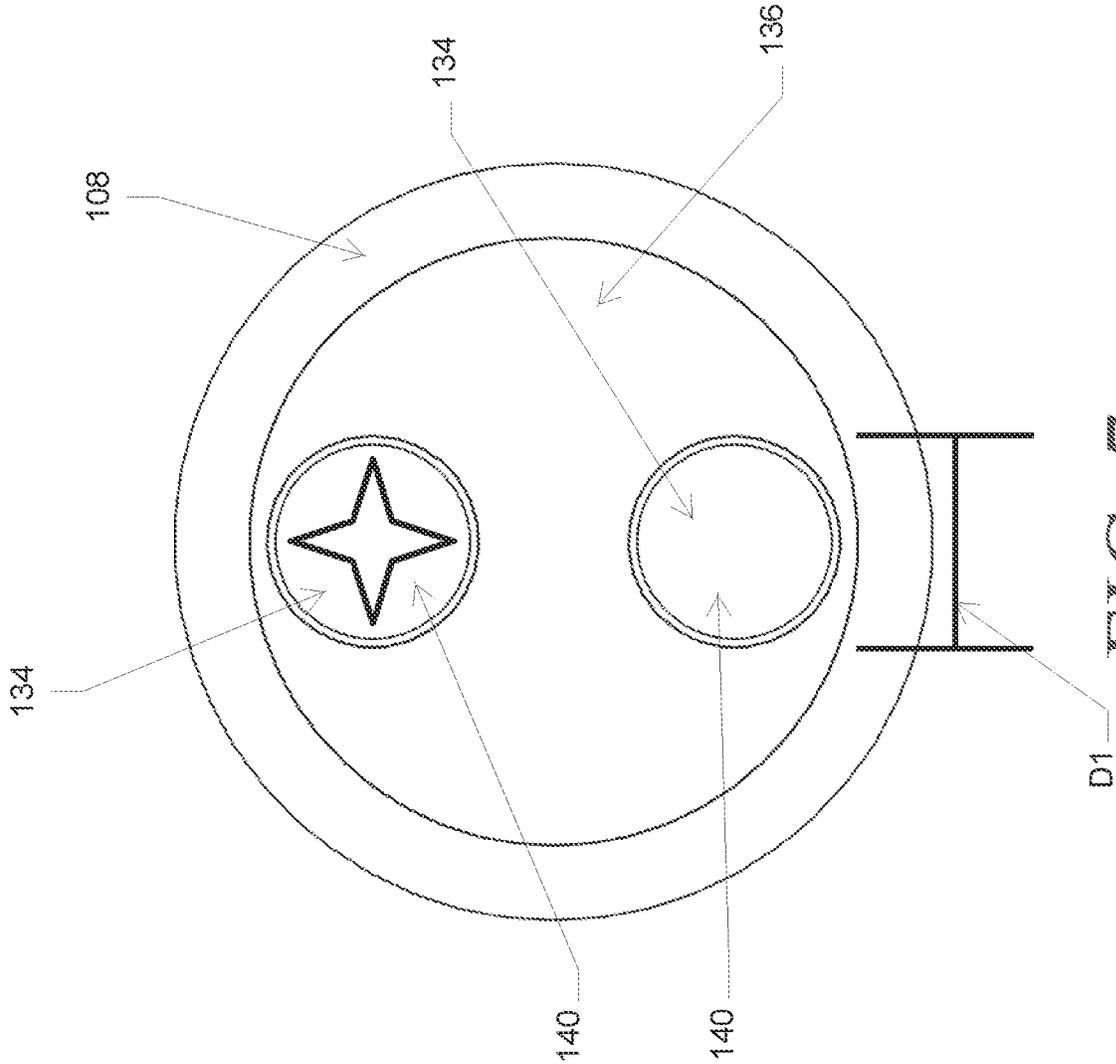


FIG. 7

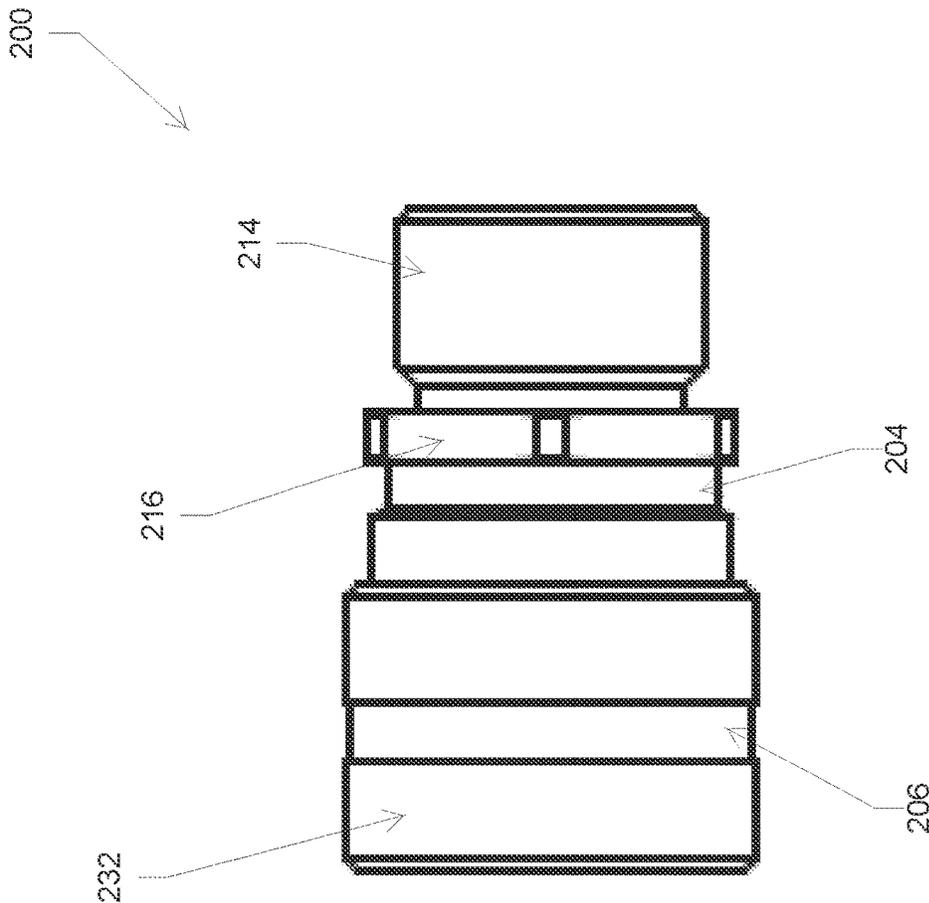


FIG. 8

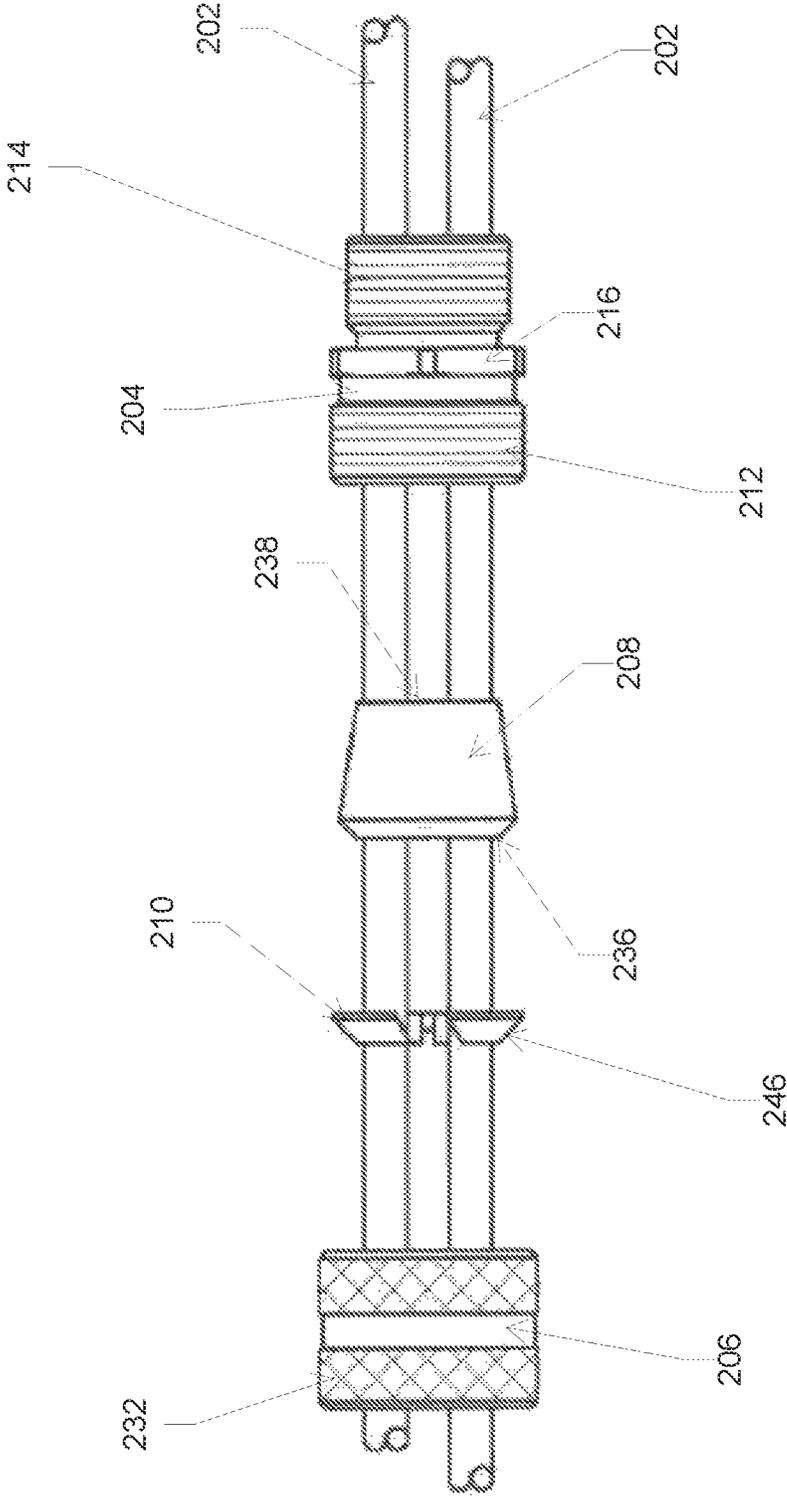


FIG. 9

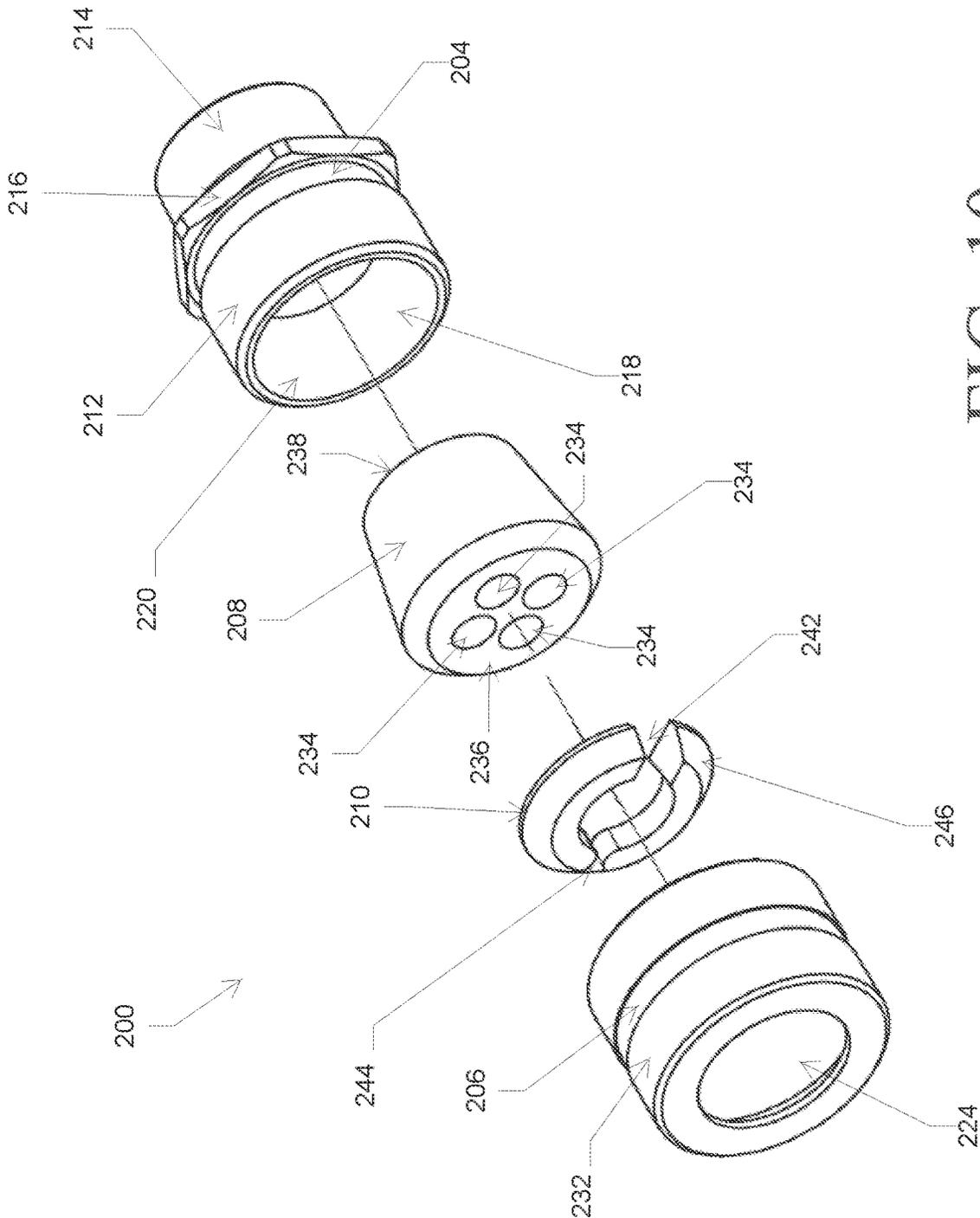


FIG. 10

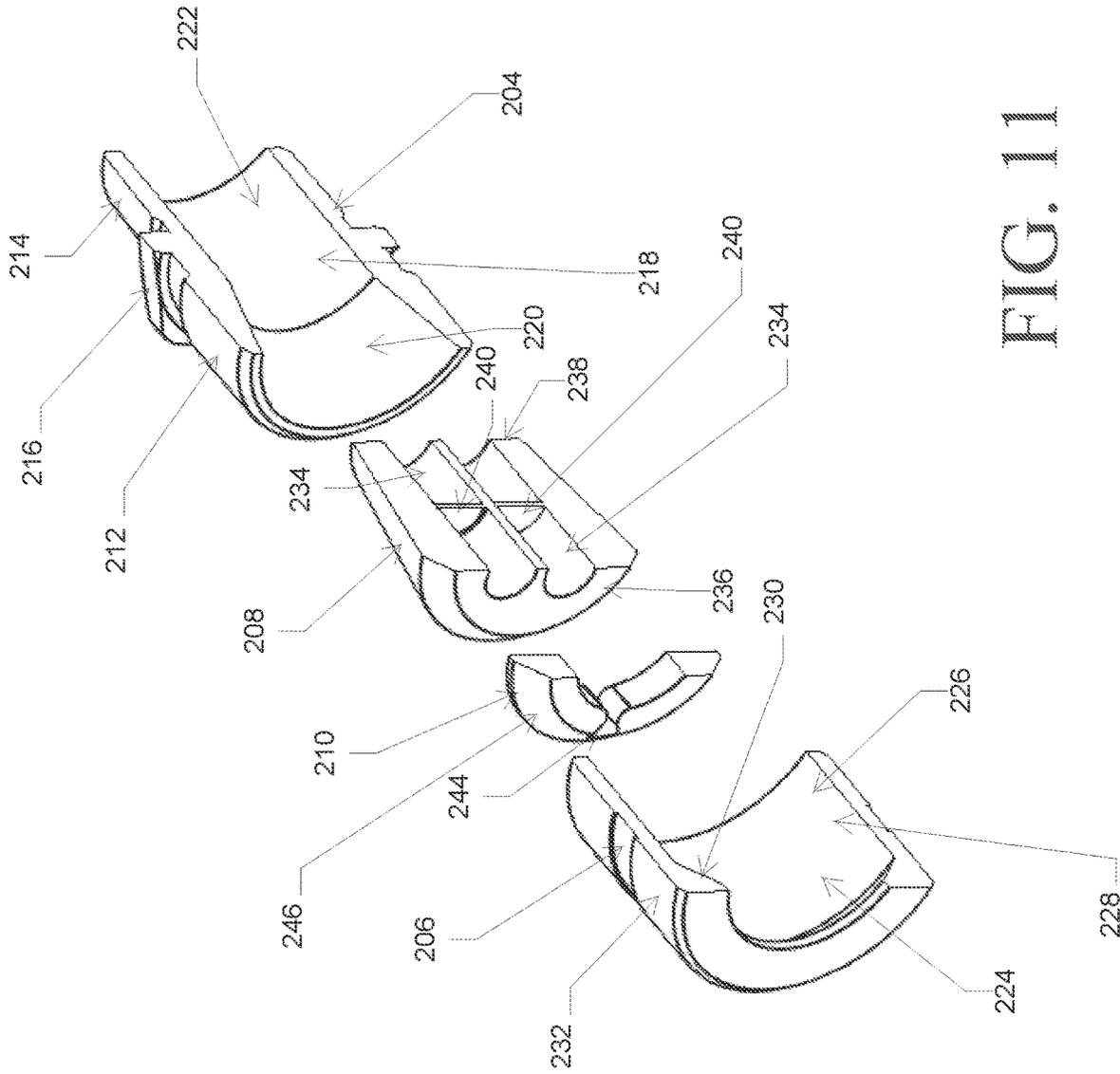


FIG. 11

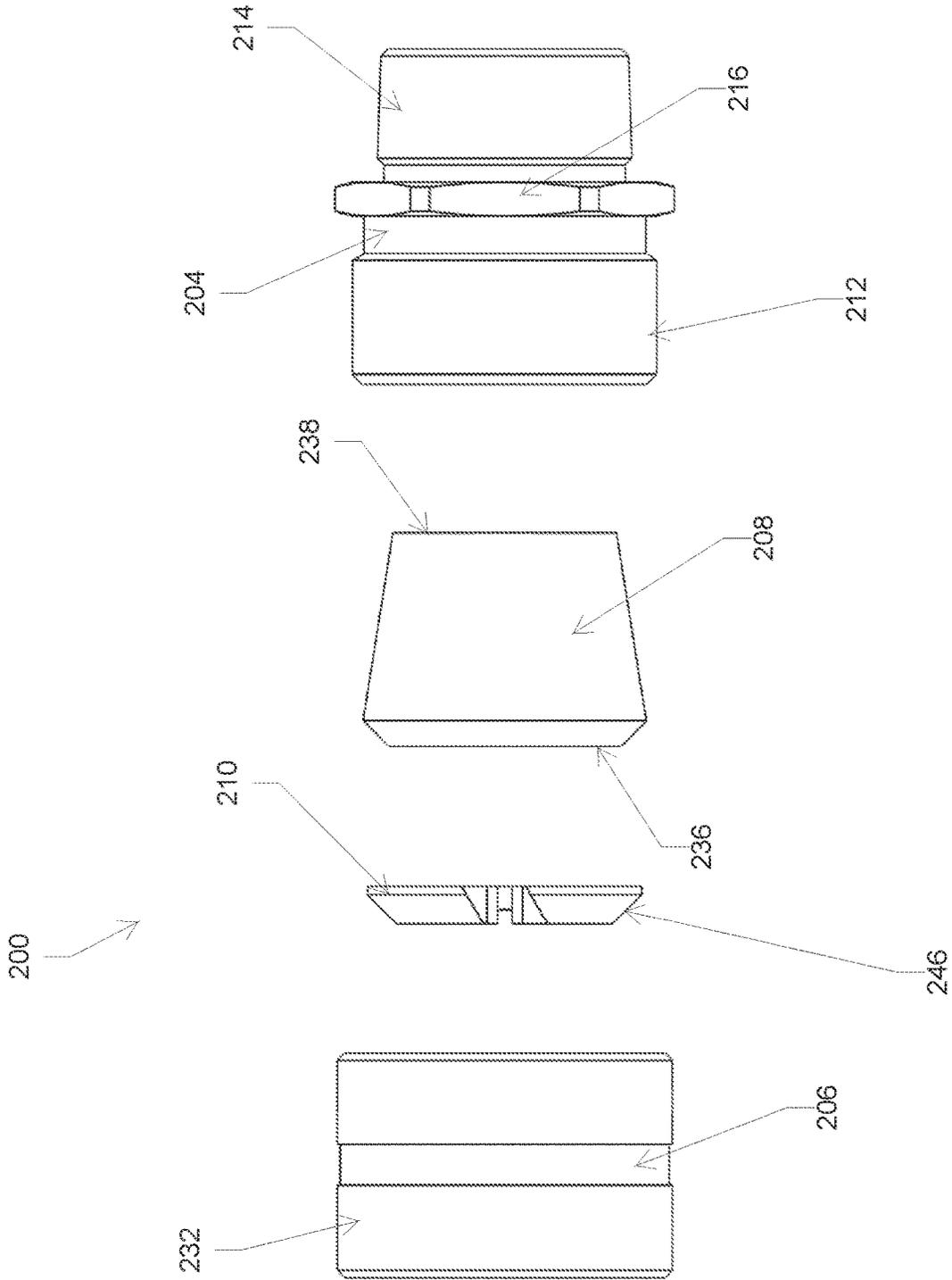


FIG. 12

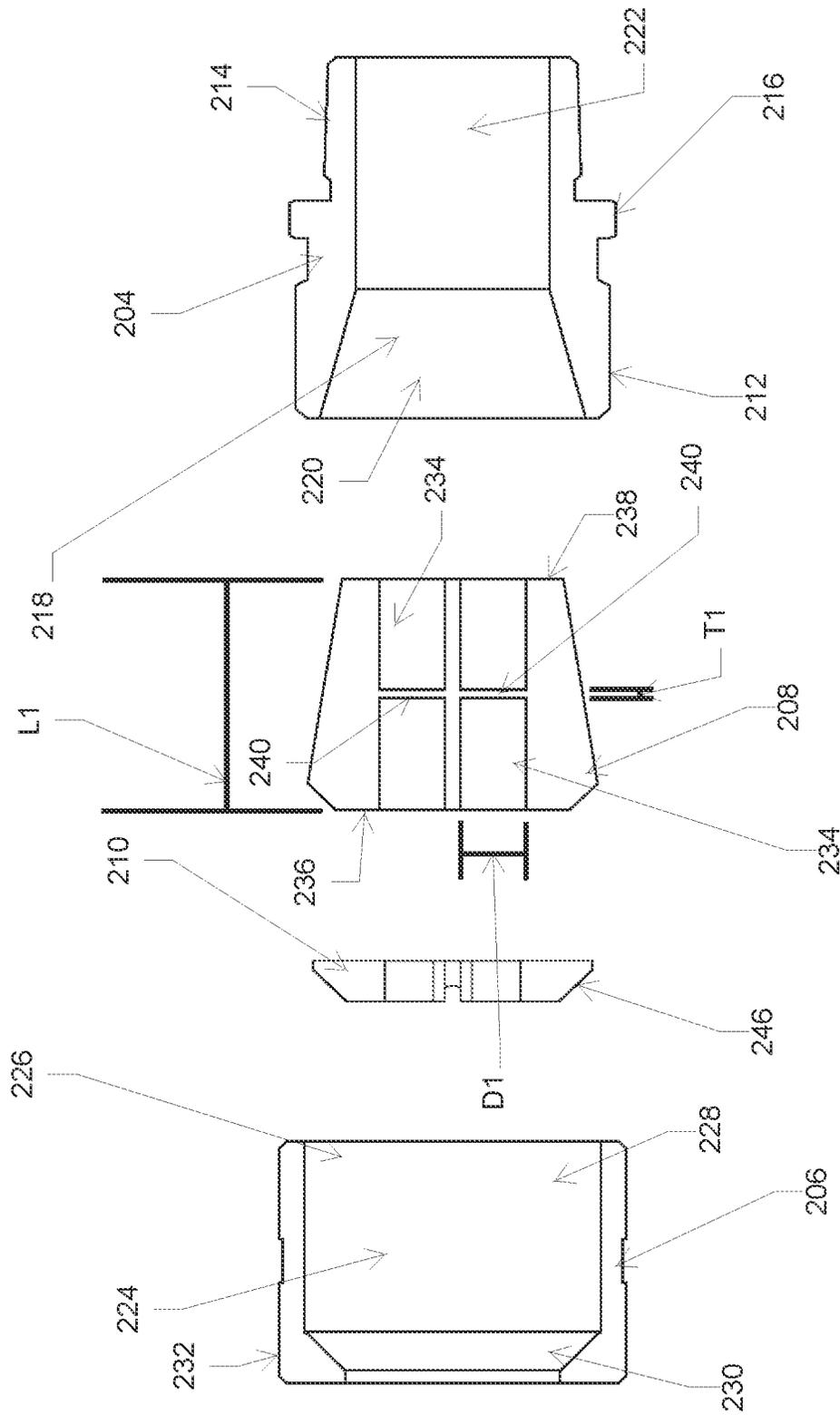


FIG. 13

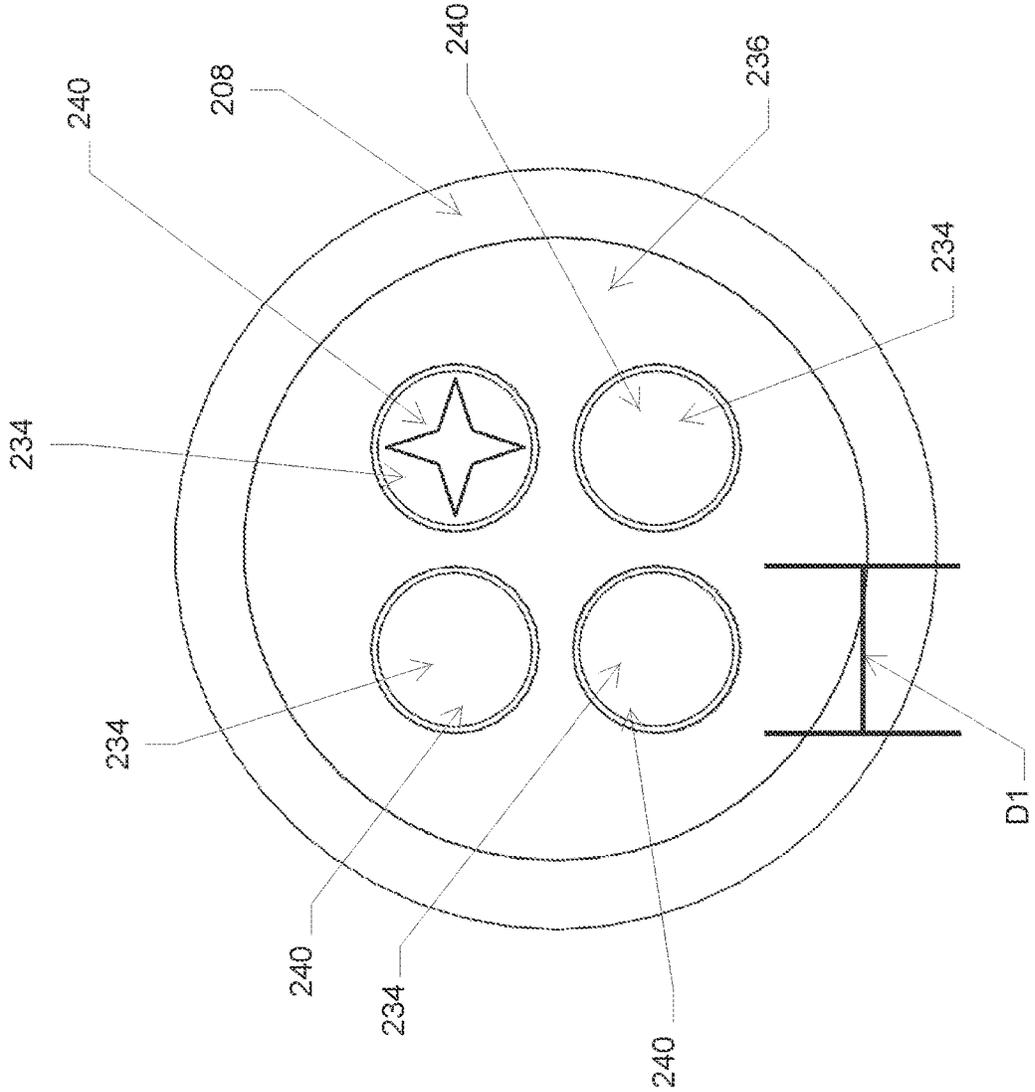


FIG. 14

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CORD CONNECTOR

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a divisional of U.S. Non Provisional application Ser. No. 17/545,095, filed Dec. 8, 2021, which is based on U.S. Provisional Application No. 63/127,479, filed Dec. 18, 2020, the disclosure of which is incorporated herein by reference in its entirety and to which priority is claimed.

FIELD

Embodiments described herein relate to a cord connector. More particularly, embodiments described herein relate to a cord connector capable of connecting multiple cords.

SUMMARY

The present disclosure relates, in one aspect, to a cord connector for holding one or more cords. The cord connector includes a first body, a second body, and a bushing. The second body is removably coupled to the first body. The bushing is disposed between the first body and the second body. The bushing includes at least two bushing passages extending from a first end of the bushing toward a second end of the bushing. Each bushing passage is sealed with a membrane. The membrane is disposed within the bushing passage between the first end and the second end. The membrane is configured to be pierced to open the bushing passage.

The present disclosure relates, in another aspect, to a cord connector for holding one or more cords. The cord connector includes a first body, a second body, and a bushing. The first body includes a first passage defined therein. The second body includes a second passage defined therein. The second body is removably coupled to the first body. The bushing is disposed in at least one of the first passage and the second passage. The bushing includes a plurality of bushing passages defined therein. Each bushing passage is at least partially blocked by a continuation of the bushing that spans across a width of the bushing passage.

The present disclosure relates, in another aspect, to a method of using a cord connector. The method includes routing a wire through a first passage of a first body, piercing a membrane disposed in a bushing passage of a bushing, opening the bushing passage, routing the wire through the bushing passage, routing the wire through a second passage of a second body, coupling the first body to the second body, and trapping the bushing between the first body and the second body.

Other aspects of the embodiments will become apparent by consideration of the detailed description and accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 illustrates a side elevation view of a cord connector, according to embodiments described herein.

FIG. 2 illustrates a side elevation view of the cord connector of FIG. 1 disassembled and disposed about a plurality of cords.

FIG. 3 illustrates an exploded perspective view of the cord connector of FIG. 1.

FIG. 4 illustrates a cross-sectional exploded perspective view of the cord connector of FIG. 1.

FIG. 5 illustrates an exploded side elevation view of the cord connector of FIG. 1.

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FIG. 6 illustrates a cross-sectional exploded side elevation view of the cord connector of FIG. 1.

FIG. 7 illustrates a front elevation view of a bushing of the cord connector of FIG. 1.

FIG. 8 illustrates a side elevation view of a cord connector, according to embodiments described herein.

FIG. 9 illustrates a side elevation view of the cord connector of FIG. 8 disassembled and disposed about a plurality of cords.

FIG. 10 illustrates an exploded perspective view of the cord connector of FIG. 8.

FIG. 11 illustrates a cross-sectional exploded perspective view of the cord connector of FIG. 8.

FIG. 12 illustrates an exploded side elevation view of the cord connector of FIG. 8.

FIG. 13 illustrates a cross-sectional exploded side elevation view of the cord connector of FIG. 8.

FIG. 14 illustrates a front elevation view of a bushing of the cord connector of FIG. 8.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present disclosure illustrates two embodiments of cord connectors **100**, **200**. Of course, this disclosure may contemplate other additional cord connectors. Features from one embodiment may be included or omitted in another embodiment to create yet another embodiment, for instance.

With reference to FIG. 1, an embodiment of a cord connector **100** is shown. The cord connector **100** is shown assembled in FIG. 1 and exploded along multiple cords **102** in FIG. 2. As best shown in FIG. 3, the cord connector **100** includes a first body **104**, a second body **106**, a bushing **108**, and a clamping ring **110**.

The first body **104** is illustrated as a unitary body, but other embodiments may include the first body **104** made of multiple components. The first body **104** may be made of a variety of materials, including one or more metals (aluminum, steel, stainless steel, an alloy, or the like), one or more polymers (such as plastic), some combination thereof, or the like.

The first body **104** includes a male threaded section **112**, which is configured to removably receive the second body **106**. The first body **104** further includes another male threaded section **114**. This other male threaded section **114** is configured to removably couple the cord connector **100** to, for instance, a junction box or other housing. Disposed between the male threaded sections **112**, **114** is a series of flats **116** configured for engagement by a tool. These series of flats **116** may facilitate the attachment of the cord connector **100** to the junction box or other housing. The first body **104** further includes a first passage **118** defined therein.

As shown in FIGS. 4 and 6, the first passage **118** may include a frustoconical section **120** and a cylindrical section **122** in fluid communication with each other. The shape of the frustoconical section **120** may facilitate the insertion and retention of the bushing **108**. The first passage **118** extends completely through the first body **104**, such that the one or more cords **102** may pass therethrough.

Returning to FIG. 3, the second body **106** is configured to removably couple to the first body **104**. The second body **106** is also illustrated as a unitary body, but other embodiments may include the second body **106** made of multiple components. The second body **106** may be made of a variety of materials, including one or more metals (aluminum, steel, stainless steel, an alloy, or the like), one or more polymers (such as plastic), some combination thereof, or the like.

In the illustrated embodiment, the second body **106** threadingly engages the first body **104**. Other embodiments, however, may include the first and second bodies **104**, **106** removably coupled to each other in different ways. For instance, the first and second bodies **104**, **106** may be removably coupled by detent mechanisms, clamps, straps, screws, bolts, or some other fasteners.

As shown in FIGS. **4** and **6**, the second body **106** includes a second passage **124** defined therein. Like the first body **104**, the second passage **124** extends completely through the second body **106**, such that the one or more cords **102** may pass therethrough. The second body **106** further includes a female threaded section **126** extending along a portion of the second passage **124**. In the illustrated embodiment, the female threaded section **126** threadingly engages the male threaded section **112** of the first body **104** to removably couple the second body **106** to the first body **104**. The second passage **124** of the second body **106** also includes a cylindrical section **128**. In some embodiments, the cylindrical section **128** of the second passage **124** includes the female threaded section **126** therein. The second passage **124** further includes a frustoconical section **130** in fluid communication with the cylindrical section **128**. The frustoconical section **130** may be shaped to engage the clamping ring **110** in some embodiments. Also in some embodiments, the frustoconical section **120** of the first passage **118** and the frustoconical section **130** of the second passage **124** may cooperate to compress the bushing **108** and the clamping ring **110** axially toward each other as the first body **104** and the second body **106** are coupled to each other. The frustoconical section **130** of the second passage **124** may also function to retain the clamping ring **110** and/or the bushing **108**. In some embodiments, the second body **106** further includes one or more sections of knurling **132** on the outer surface of the second body **106** to facilitate threadingly engaging the first body **104** with the second body **106**. Of course, other structures, such as a series of flats, a series of concave indentations, a rubberized section, or some other grip-facilitation may be utilized.

With reference to FIG. **3**, the bushing **108** includes a single unitary body formed with two bushing passages **134** extending therethrough from a first end **136** of the bushing **108** to a second end **138** of the bushing **108**. Although the bushing passages **134** are illustrated as being circular in cross-section, other cross-sectional shapes (triangular, elliptical, rectangular, pentagonal, hexagonal, or the like) are contemplated herein. The bushing **108** may be made of a polymer, such as rubber. An example of a synthetic rubber suitable for the bushing **108** is neoprene. The bushing **108** may be formed with a generally frustoconical shape so as to fit in the frustoconical section **120** of the first passage **118** to form a liquid-tight seal. The illustrated embodiment of the bushing **108** resembles the shape of a cork or stopper.

As shown in FIGS. **4** and **6**, each of the bushing passages **134** are interrupted by a membrane, or continuation, **140** of the bushing **108** disposed along each of the respective bushing passages **134** between the first end **136** and the second end **138** of the bushing **108**. In some embodiments, the membrane **140** is disposed midway along a length **L1** of the respective bushing passage **134**. In some embodiments, the membrane **140** forms a liquid-tight seal across the respective bushing passage **134**. In the illustrated embodiment, the membrane **140** has a thickness **T1** that is approximately one tenth (10%) of the measurement of the diameter **D1** (or width) of the bushing passage **134**. Other embodiments may have thicker or thinner membranes **140**. The

illustrated embodiment may include a membrane **140** that has a thickness **T1** of, for instance, less than or equal to 1 millimeter.

Although the illustrated embodiment includes the membrane **140** of each bushing passage **134** being formed as a unitary part with the remainder of the bushing **134**, some embodiments may include a membrane **140** that is of a different material from the bushing **134**. Such embodiments may include, for instance, the membrane **140** trapped between layers of the bushing **134**, affixed to the bushing **134** with adhesive, some combination thereof, or the like.

As shown in FIG. **7**, the membrane **140** is configured to be pierced, broken, burst, removed, or otherwise opened to create a fluid communication in the respective bushing passage **134** from the first end **136** to the second end **138** of the bushing **108**. In some embodiments, a user may pierce the membrane **140** with, for instance, a screw driver in order to open the bushing passage **134** for insertion of a cord **102** therethrough. In this manner, a user may pierce the desired number of membranes **140** corresponding to the number of cords **102** to be passed through the cord connector **100**, leaving the remaining unused bushing passages **134** unpierced and, therefore, sealed without the need for a secondary sealing structure.

With reference to FIG. **3**, the cord connector **100** also includes the clamping ring **110**. The clamping ring **110** may be made of, for instance, a polymer material. In some embodiments, the clamping ring **110** is made of nylon. The clamping ring **110** includes a gap **142** and a hinge **144**. In the illustrated embodiment, the gap **142** and the hinge **144** are diametrically opposed. The clamping ring **110** is placed between the first body **104** and the second body **106** and facilitates in arranging and/or retaining the one or more cords **102** passing through the cord connector **100**. In some embodiments, the clamping ring **110** includes a frustoconical surface **146** that is shaped to engage the frustoconical surface **130** of the second passage **124**.

Turning now to FIG. **8**, the present disclosure also contemplates another embodiment of a cord connector **200**. This second embodiment of a cord connector **200** shares many components with the cord connector **100** discussed above. Of course, the cord connectors **100**, **200** need not be similar as described herein, since the described embodiments are only examples. For the second embodiment of a cord connector **200** described herein, only differences from the cord connector **100** described above will be explored below. Similar components will be numbered with a value of one hundred higher than the corresponding components from the cord connector **100** above, and, as such, may not be explicitly described below in the interest of brevity.

The second embodiment of a cord connector **200** includes four bushing passages **234** defined in the bushing **208**. As stated above, each of the bushing passages **234** is at least partially blocked/interrupted by a respective membrane, or continuation, **240** of the bushing **208**. In some embodiments, the bushing **208** is larger in diameter to accommodate four cords **202** of the same type as the cords **102** discussed above. In such embodiments, the diameters of the first passage **218** and the second passage **224** may likewise be larger. Other embodiments may include a bushing **208**, first body **204**, and second body **206** that are similar in size to those discussed above, making the cord connector **200** configured to function with cords **202** that are smaller in diameter than the cords **102** discussed above. The second embodiment of the cord connector **200** functions in substantially the same manner as the cord connector **100** discussed above. The second embodiment of the cord connector **200** is included

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herein to illustrate that the cord connectors **100, 200** contemplated herein may have any appropriate number of bushing passages **234** and corresponding respective membranes **240**. Further embodiments may include more or fewer bushing passages and respective membranes, such as three, five, six, seven, or the like.

As stated above, the illustrated cord connectors **100, 200** may be used for wire/cord management. In some embodiments, the cord connectors **100, 200**, may hold the cords **102, 202** in a liquid-tight connection. In some embodiments, the cord connectors **100, 202** may preclude the need for secondary sealing mechanisms to provide the liquid-tight connection.

The present disclosure also relates to a method of using (or a method of installing) a cord connector **100, 200**. A user may arrange the cord connector **100, 200** such that the bushing **108, 208** and the clamping ring **110, 210** are disposed between the first body **104, 204** and the second body **106, 206**. The user may route a cord, or wire, **102, 202** through the first passage **118, 218** of the first body **104, 204**. The user may also pierce the membrane **140, 240** associated with and disposed in the corresponding desired bushing passage **134, 234** of the bushing **108, 208**, thereby opening the bushing passage **134, 234** for use. Once the membrane **140, 240** has been broken, the user may route the cord **102, 202** through the bushing passage **134, 234**. The cord **102, 202** is also routed through the second passage **124, 224** of the second body **106, 206**. The clamping ring **110, 210** is clamped around the one or more cords **102, 202** adjacent the bushing **108, 208**, and the bushing **108, 208** and clamping ring **110, 210** are trapped between the first **104, 204** and second **106, 206** bodies by coupling the second body **106, 206** to the first body **104, 204**. A user may then attach the cord connector **100, 200** to, for instance, a housing or junction box. The user may leave unused bushing passages **134, 234** unoccupied, thereby leaving their respective membranes **140, 240** unbroken, which allows for the cord connector **100, 200** to form a liquid-tight seal without the need for additional secondary sealing structures.

What is claimed is:

1. A cord connector for holding one or more cords, the cord connector comprising:

a first body including a first passage defined therein;
a second body removably coupled to the first body, the second body including a second passage defined therein; and

a bushing disposed in at least one of the first passage and the second passage, the bushing including a plurality of bushing passages defined therein, each bushing passage at least partially blocked by a continuation of the bushing that spans across a width of the bushing passage.

2. The cord connector of claim **1**, wherein the continuation of the bushing spanning across the bushing passage completely seals the bushing passage.

3. The cord connector of claim **1**, wherein the continuation of the bushing spanning across the bushing passage is disposed midway along a length of the bushing passage.

4. The cord connector of claim **1**, wherein a thickness of the continuation of the bushing spanning across the bushing passage is less than or equal to 10% of the width of the bushing passage.

5. The cord connector of claim **1**, wherein the bushing is made of a polymer material.

6. The cord connector of claim **1**, wherein the first body includes a male threaded section, the male threaded section including the first passage defined at least partially therein.

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7. The cord connector of claim **6**, wherein the second body includes a female threaded section configured to mate with the male threaded section such that the bushing is trapped between the first body and the second body.

8. The cord connector of claim **1**, further comprising a clamping ring disposed between the first body and the second body.

9. The cord connector of claim **1**, wherein the continuation of each bushing passage is formed as a unitary part with the bushing.

10. A cord connector for holding one or more cords, the cord connector comprising:

a first body;

a second body coupled to the first body; and

a bushing disposed between the first body and the second body, the bushing including a bushing passage extending from a first end of the bushing toward a second end of the bushing, the bushing passage at least partially blocked by a continuation of the bushing that spans across a width of the bushing passage;

wherein the continuation of the bushing passage is formed as a unitary part with the bushing; and

wherein the continuation of the bushing spans across the bushing passage completely seals the bushing passage.

11. The cord connector of claim **10**, further comprising a clamping ring disposed between the first body and the second body, the clamping ring having a gap and a hinge opposite to the gap, wherein the clamping ring is movable about the hinge to adjust a size of the gap.

12. The cord connector of claim **10**, wherein:

the first body includes a first passage defined therein, the first body includes a male threaded section, the male threaded section including the first passage defined at least partially therein; and

the second body includes a second passage defined therein, wherein the second body includes a female threaded section configured to mate with the male threaded section such that the bushing is trapped between the first body and the second body.

13. The cord connector of claim **10**, wherein the bushing passage is a first bushing passage and the bushing further includes a second bushing passage that extends from the first end of the bushing toward the second end of the bushing.

14. The cord connector of claim **10**, wherein a thickness of the continuation of the bushing spanning across the bushing passage is less than or equal to 10% of the width of the bushing passage.

15. A cord connector for holding one or more cords, the cord connector comprising:

a first body;

a second body coupled to the first body;

a bushing disposed between the first body and the second body, the bushing including a bushing passage extending from a first end of the bushing toward a second end of the bushing, the bushing passage at least partially blocked by a continuation of the bushing that spans across a width of the bushing passage; and

a clamping ring disposed between the first body and the second body, wherein the clamping ring is configured to retain the one or more cords passing through the first body and the second body.

16. The cord connector of claim **15**, wherein the clamping ring has a gap and a hinge opposite to the gap, and wherein the clamping ring is movable about the hinge to adjust a size of the gap.

17. The cord connector of claim 15, wherein the continuation of the bushing spans across the bushing passage completely seals the bushing passage.

18. The cord connector of claim 15, wherein the continuation of each bushing passage is formed as a unitary part 5 with the bushing.

19. The cord connector of claim 15, wherein the second body includes a frustoconical section, and wherein the clamping ring has a frustoconical shape that is configured to engage the frustoconical section of the second body. 10

20. The cord connector of claim 15, wherein the first body includes a male threaded section, wherein the second body includes a female threaded section configured to mate with the male threaded section such that the bushing is trapped between the first body and the second body, and wherein the clamping ring is configured to be compressed when the male 15 threaded section engages the female threaded section.

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